

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-17 herein without prejudice or disclaimer reserving the right to file a continuation application or take other steps to preserve the novelty of the invention recited therein.

Please insert herein new claims 18-19 as follows:

18. A tracheostomy tube adapted to be disposed on the neck of a patient comprising:

a neck plate having a given width and further having a first end, an opposite second end and an opening between said first and second ends;

a cannula received in the opening in the neck plate, the cannula adapted to be inserted into the throat of the patient;

a first band integrally formed on the first end of the neck plate;

the first band having a given length and further having a free end distally of the neck plate;

*A2*

a second band integrally formed on the second end of the neck plate;

the second band having a shorter length than the first band and further having a free end distally of the neck plate;

each of the first and second bands having a width which is smaller than the width of the neck plate and blending in a curved transitional manner into the neck plate to form a unitary structure;

means for rapidly connecting and disconnecting the free end of the first band with the free end of the second band such that the bands, when connected, are adapted to encircle the neck of the patient;

the bands and the neck plate being formed from a viscoelastic polymer which is adapted to mold itself to the anatomy and contours of the patient's neck;

whereby the respective bands may be quickly and conveniently fitted around a patient's neck, and whereby the tracheostomy tube may be adapted to be inserted into the patient's throat and rapidly mounted thereto without discomfort and without irritation to the patient.

*A2*  
19. The tracheostomy tube of claim 18, further comprising an adjustment means attached to one of the bands such that the one of the bands may be shortened or lengthened and adapted for the comfort of the patient.